

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 AS-01 DEAE-00 CIAE-00

INR-07 JUSE-00 NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 USIA-06

NSC-05 OES-07 OMB-01 EB-07 PM-04 SP-02 SS-15

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R 230915Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8245

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

CONFIDENTIAL VIENTIANE 0954

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SNAR PGOV LA HK

SUBJECT: LPDR POLICY ON INTERNATIONAL SALES OF LAO OPIUM

1. BOUTSABONG SOUVANNAVONG, SECRETARY OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF FINANCE, REPORTEDLY TOLD AN ASIAN DIPLOMAT IN LATE MAY THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT HAD BEGUN THE SALE OF LAO OPIUM TO "SOCIALIST" COUNTRIES. HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE LAO GOVERNMENT PURCHASED THE OPIUM FROM LAO CITIZENS.

2. A WELL INFORMED WESTERN SOURCE RESIDENT IN VIEN-TIANE TOLD EMBOFF IN LATE APRIL THAT A JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN RESIDENT IN VIENTIANE HAD TOLD HIM OF HAVING NEGOTIATED A LUCRATIVE DEAL WITH THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE WHEREBY HE WOULD SELL "A LAO PRODUCT" IN HONG KONG. A JAPANESE DIPLOMAT JUNE 9 TOLD EMBOFF

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THAT A JAPANESE BUSINESSMAN RESIDENT IN VIENTIANE "RECENTLY" SOLD OPIUM OBTAINED THROUGH CONTACTS WITHIN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE TO TRAFFICKERS IN HONG KONG.

3. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT THE SALE WAS TO BE THE INITIAL TRANSACTION IN A REGULAR NETWORK OF SALES OF

LAO OPIUM IN HONG KONG, BUT THAT THE HONG KONG TRAFFICKERS WERE DISSATISFIED WITH THE INITIAL TRANSACTION AND HAD REFUSED TO CONTINUE THE ARRANGEMENT. THE DIPLOMAT SAID THAT HE DID NOT KNOW IF THE DECISION WAS BASED ON THE TRAFFICKERS' DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PRODUCT OR WITH THE PROCEDURE.

4. COMMENT: REPORTS OF LPDR SALES OF LAO OPIUM TO "SOCIALIST" GOVERNMENTS FOR "MEDICINAL PURPOSES" (PARA 1) ARE FAIRLY COMMON. REPORT OF LPDR ATTEMPTS TO SELL OPIUM IN ILLICIT TRAFFICKING CHANNELS, HOWEVER, IS NEW. IF TRUE, THE REPORT COULD REFLECT EITHER GOVERNMENT POLICY OR, POSSIBLY, INDIVIDUAL CORRUPTION.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
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Format: TEL
From: VIENTIANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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